



Noninterference 2.0: China’s Evolving Foreign Policy towards a Changing Africa

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Abstract

- This article suggests that despite consistent support for the rhetoric of noninterference China’s implementation of the policy has become varied and contextualized in reaction to Africa’s increasingly diversified political and economic landscape since the early 2000s.
- As Sino-African linkages have deepened, they have created economic winners and losers within African states, creating “anti-China” special interests. Countries with competitive economic relations (high export similarity) have seen concentrations of anti-China sentiment among negatively impacted populations.
- Manifestations of anti-China sentiment have varied across regimes: ranging from organized violence against Chinese firms and nationals by insurgent groups in Sudan and Ethiopia to the adoption of anti-Chinese campaign slogans in Zambia.
- In addressing backlashes against growing engagement and maintaining relatively high public approval, Beijing has modified its approach of noninterference in African relations:
 - Single-party engagement in consolidated autocracies, e.g. Sudan and Ethiopia
 - Multiparty engagement in consolidated democracies, e.g. Ghana
 - Flexible engagement in transitional regimes, e.g. Zambia and Nigeria

Export Similarity with China

Rank	Country
1	South Africa
2	Kenya
3	Ghana
4	Tanzania
5	Cameroon
6	DR Congo
7	Gabon
8	Ethiopia
9	Angola
10	Sudan
11	Nigeria

Source:
Carnegie Endowment (2012)



Source: Zambia
Watchdog (2011)

Regime Types in Sub-Saharan Africa



Source: Freedom House (2014)

For Africa, China’s Policy of “Non-interference” is:

Country	A good policy (%)	Basically good, but with some problems (%)	More harmful than good (%)	Quite harmful (%)	Don't know (%)	Number
Botswana	22.2	34.3	18.7	9.1	15.7	230
Egypt	34.4	23.6	19.5	7.2	15.4	195
Ethiopia	14.3	50.5	16.3	11.2	7.7	196
Ghana	24.0	32.8	13.6	19.2	10.4	250
Kenya	31.1	35.8	16.6	12.4	4.1	193
Nigeria	17.3	31.0	14.7	12.7	24.4	197
South Africa	12.2	31.0	19.8	13.2	23.9	197
Sudan	43.2	33.6	8.0	4.8	10.4	250
Zambia	29.6	36.2	18.9	8.2	7.1	196
Total (%)	25.7	34.2	16.0	10.9	13.1	100
Total number	490	652	304	208	250	1,904

Source: Barry Sautman and Yan Hairong (2009: 738)